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WHERE HISTORY BEGINS



WINTER / SPRING 2025

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Missouri Secretary of State

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State Archives

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WINTER HOURS (SEPTEMBER TO MAY)

Monday to Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
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Monday to Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Second and Fourth Saturdays: 9:00 am to 1:00 p.m.
Third Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.




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ON THE COVER

Closeup of purple martin (*Progne subis*) on a branch.
Source: RG103_Digital_0037; RG103.03 Missouri Department of
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FROM THE STATE ARCHIVIST

Welcome back, newsletter readers! We appreciate your patience during our recent publishing pause. Several factors contributed to the hiatus, but we're thrilled to be back and plan to continue releasing new editions on a semiannual basis. In the meantime, be sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, and YouTube for daily Missouri history content and updates. If you're not following us yet, you've likely missed some exciting news from the Missouri State Archives. For instance, we recently installed a disaster recovery blast freezer and an automated robotic scanner—and that's just for starters!

Since our last edition, we've also launched two new online databases:

- The County and Municipal Records Database now provides access to records from 102 Missouri counties, ranging from county and city minute books to ordinances, deeds, and marriage records.
- The Census Records and Tax Lists Database includes territorial and early state tax lists, as well as Missouri's federal mortality (1850–1880), slave (1850–1860), manufacturing and industrial (1850–1880), and agricultural (1850–1880) schedules.

Both databases are updated frequently, so follow our social media pages for information about the latest additions!

We've also expanded the **Missouri Digital Heritage website with new collections**, including:

- **The Missouri Bicentennial Photograph Drive Collection**, featuring historic images donated by the public; and
- **The Livre Terrein**, a collection of early land records documenting French land claims in Missouri.

In other news, our annual death certificate indexing project is complete. Thanks to our dedicated online volunteers, certificates from 1974 have been fully transcribed and are now available in the Missouri Death Certificate Database.

For visually engaging content, check out our YouTube channel where you can now watch historic films from the Missouri State Fair, Department of Transportation, and Department of Conservation.



Missouri State Archivist John Dougan (right) placing records in the new blast freezer with Local Records Program Director John Korasick and Conservator Jennie Phelps. Source: *Missouri State Archives (MSA)*; photograph by MSA staff.



The Missouri State Archives new Robo Scan 1. As the name implies, this high-tech piece of equipment can scan an entire book nearly by itself! Source: *Missouri State Archives*; photograph by MSA staff.

You'll also find recordings of past Thursday Evening Speaker Series programs, an eight-part photograph preservation workshop, and much more. Subscribe today to stay updated!

Finally, we're excited to announce the Friends of the **Missouri State Archives Show-Me Genealogy Fellowship!** This new annual opportunity provides a \$1,500 award to help genealogists cover expenses when visiting us in Jefferson City or our St. Louis office. See the notice later in this edition for details.

As you can see, we've been busy despite the long break! Thank you for your ongoing support of the Missouri State Archives, and again, for your patience.

John Dougan

ARCHIVES AFIELD!

ACCOUNT OF A SHOTGUN WEDDING

BY SALLY BREMER
LOCAL RECORDS PROGRAM FIELD ARCHIVIST

Missouri's Local Records Program, a division of the Missouri State Archives, assists local governments with records management practices. The program's field archivists, this author included, assist local officials around the state with records retention and preserving permanent and historically significant records. Since 2018, I've been involved with a project preparing Bates County Circuit Court case files for imaging. Many interesting cases have come across my desk during that time, ranging from debt to murder. Some of the most memorable, however, have been divorces. Recently, I came across a fascinating example that included a detailed account of a shotgun wedding.

The divorce case of *Alfaretta Hallam v. Charles Hallam*, filed in the Court's July 1877 term, began in the usual way, with the plaintiff claiming that "while she resided with defendant she treated him as a kind and affectionate wife, but that defendant treated her with cruelty and utterly refused to support her." One party is often accused of abandonment or absenting themselves from their spouse in divorce. In this case, the wife stated that she was driven out of her husband's home just one week after their marriage. She continued that she was in "delicate health," unable to provide for herself, and was therefore asking for support and maintenance.

The reason for her delicate health was revealed in the defendant's answer, in which he claimed that the plaintiff had been "enceinte [pregnant], and such a condition as to become a mother within a few days." Furthermore, he claimed he was wrongfully accused of being the father. His answer goes on to reveal more details about how the two parties came to marry. The defendant claimed he refused to wed the plaintiff when pressed by her family, but that while he was "very much intoxicated," they had obtained the services of a justice of the peace and forced the marriage ceremony upon him.

The deposition of the justice of the peace, C.C. Steele of Rockville Township, contradicts some of the defendant's claims, but it does show the

Alfaretta Hallam Plaintiff
against
Charles Hallam Defendant

In the Circuit Court of
Bates County Missouri
July Term A D 1877,

Plaintiff Alfaretta Hallam
States that she is the wife
of the defendant Charles
Hallam, and that they
were married on the day
of 1877.
That upon her marriage
with the defendant she
went to and resided with
him as his wife and con-
tinued to do so for about the
period of one week, when
the defendant drove her
away from his house
and refused to allow her
to live with him, and did
refuse so to do.
Plaintiff says that while she
resided with defendant

Above: First page of the petition filed with the Bates County Circuit Court in the divorce case between Alfaretta and Charles Hallam. Source: *Alfaretta Hallam v. Charles Hallam*, July Term, 1877; Case No. 9032 (Missouri State Archives microfilm roll C72225); Bates County Circuit Court; Missouri State Archives.

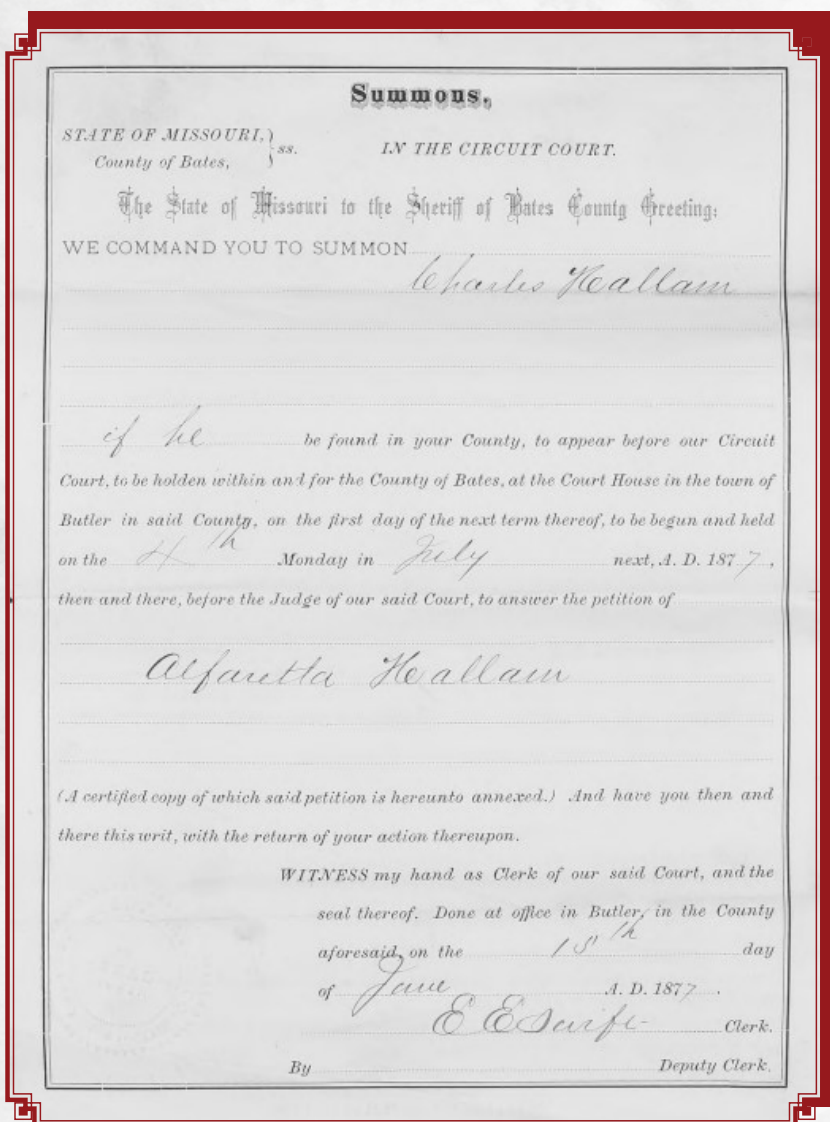
fundamental truth: The defendant did not want to marry the plaintiff. While the groom seemed aware of the upcoming ceremony, the depositions describe a man trying to escape. It appears as if the plaintiff and her family held him responsible for the pregnancy, explaining to the defendant that he could be prosecuted if he failed to follow through with the marriage. Steele stated that earlier in the evening of April 21, 1877, before the ceremony, the defendant "said he would give me \$50 to make a false, or mock ceremony of it." Justice of the Peace Steele replied that he would not do such a thing.

When Steele arrived to perform the ceremony, he found "Charlie" drinking and in an excitable state. In his opinion, the defendant's behavior was calculated to "intimidate the parties and myself so that the ceremony would not be said." Shortly after, in the presence of his fiancé and another woman, the defendant threatened to "fix" the justice of the peace and drew a pistol. Steele took it away from him. Undaunted, the defendant then drew out a dirk knife, which Steele also relieved off him. And last came a pocket knife that the defendant again

Right: Summons issued by the Bates County Circuit Court commanding Charles Hallam to appear before the court on July 4, 1877, in the matter of his divorce case. Source: *Alfaretta Hallam v. Charles Hallam*, July Term, 1877; Case No. 9032 (Missouri State Archives microfilm roll C72225); Bates County Circuit Court; Missouri State Archives.

“

[...] in the presence of his fiancé and another woman, the defendant threatened to “fix” the justice of the peace and DREW A PISTOL.



lost quickly. Following this, the reluctant groom “*did not seem half so boisterous as before,*” according to Steele.

After confiscating the weapons, Steele told the party that if they were to marry, it needed to occur presently. The ceremony was performed, with some grumbling from the groom and the marriage certificate written out. Wisely, Steele gave the certificate to the new Mrs. Hallam for safekeeping.

The Bates Circuit Court minute book from the March 1878 term reveals the trial’s outcome in favor of the plaintiff. The opinion indicates that the Court believed she was abandoned by her husband. (Or driven out, as she said.) In her original petition, the plaintiff asked for maintenance, stating that she believed the defendant possessed \$3,000, which he could sufficiently provide for her and their child. The court ordered that she recover \$75 from the defendant before the next court term, and the case was continued.

In the March 1879 term, Alfaretta Hallam filed an amended petition seeking a divorce as well

as maintenance. In this instance, the court again believed that the two parties had lived together as man and wife for one week and that the defendant had absented himself from his wife. These records also reveal the name and age of the child born of the marriage. One Maud Hallam was 22 months old at the time of the trial on March 13, 1879, suggesting that Alfaretta Hallam was in an advanced stage of pregnancy at the time of the ceremony. The court granted the divorce, and the defendant was ordered to pay the plaintiff \$20 by the next term. Unfortunately, the case file has no further record of the pair.

What might be more bizarre than the events leading up to the wedding is that the bride’s family – not to mention the justice of the peace – felt comfortable allowing the marriage to proceed after the groom had drunkenly brandished weapons. It appears that the plaintiff’s well-being was not their first priority. Reading between the lines, though, neither party sounds entirely innocent. There is no way to know if the plaintiff was complicit in compelling Charles Hallam to the altar, but a happy marriage was never a real possibility.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE LIFE OF JOHN ANDERSON, FUGITIVE SLAVE

BY MAEVE PRUSNICK, OUTREACH ARCHIVIST



Above: Engraving of John Anderson. Source: *The Story of the Life of John Anderson, the Fugitive Slave*; London, England; William Tweedie; 1863.

“

This new “ONCE FREE, ALWAYS FREE” legal precedent, recognized throughout the country, allowed hundreds of enslaved individuals to gain their freedom, but it wasn’t the only path.



Above: Engravings of Dred and Harriet Scott created from photographs by John H. Fitzgibbon. Source: *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 3, 1857; courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

In 1807, a Louisiana territorial statute established that a person held in wrongful servitude could sue for their freedom. Litigating for one's freedom wasn't easy, though. Enslaved African Americans, the majority of people who utilized the law, were required to prove that they'd been held in bondage and been made free. When the statute became Missouri law in 1824, a “golden age” of freedom suits began.

In the case of *Winny v. Whitesides* (1824), Winny, the slave of Phoebe Whitesides, moved with her owner from Kentucky to the Indiana Territory, where slavery was prohibited. In their ruling, Missouri Supreme Court Justices Mathias McGirk and George Tompkins concluded:

“...this court thinks that the person who takes his slave into said Territory and by the length of his residence there indicates an intention of making that place his residence & that of his slave and thereby induces a jury to believe that fact does by such residence declare his slave to have become a free man.”

This new “once free, always free” legal precedent, recognized throughout the country, allowed hundreds of enslaved individuals to gain their freedom, but it wasn't the only path.

During this time, others used a more direct strategy to escape slavery: they ran. Estimates of how many enslaved people escaped between 1810 and 1850 vary, with figures ranging from as few as 6,000 to as many as 100,000. In response to this influx of fugitives, U.S. Senator James M. Mason of Virginia

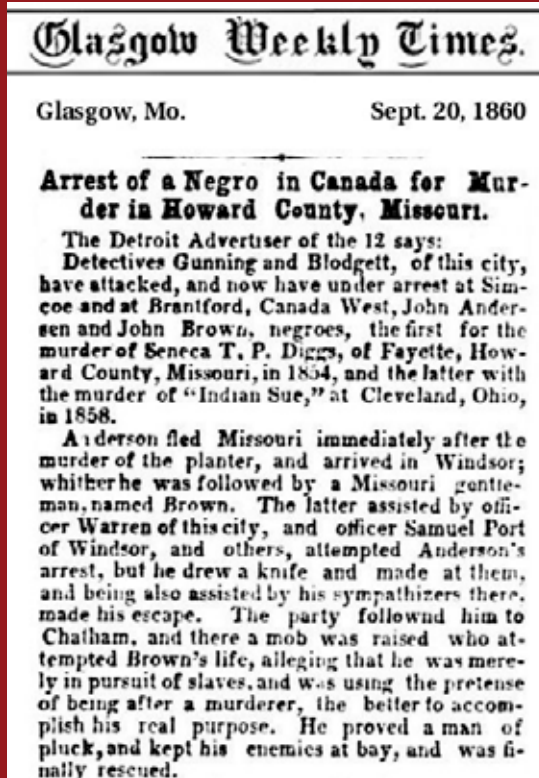
drafted the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which President Millard Fillmore signed into law on Sept. 18, 1850. This legislation imposed fines of \$1,000 (equivalent to \$36,000 today) on officials who failed to arrest persons fleeing slavery, fining them \$1,000 (\$36,000+ today). The same fine – or six years in prison – could be imposed on anyone for sheltering or aiding a fugitive. Additionally, no juries were permitted in fugitive hearings, and suspected enslaved persons were prohibited from testifying.

To circle back, in 1846, Dred Scott and his wife, Harriet, famously challenged Missouri's “once free, always free” legal precedent. Despite having lived in the free states of Illinois and Wisconsin, despite the standing precedent and despite lower court rulings that found them free, the Missouri Supreme Court denied the Scotts their freedom in 1852. The “golden age” of freedom suits was coming to an end. For one man, though, a complex legal journey was just beginning.

Given the name Jack by his first owners, John Anderson was born into slavery in an unknown year. He never knew his father, only that he had escaped to the North. His mother was a slave owned by Moses Burton of Fayette, Howard County, Missouri, but she was eventually sold down the river to New Orleans.

On Christmas Day 1850, Anderson married Maria Tomlin, an enslaved woman from a neighboring farm, and the couple soon had a child. In 1853, however, Anderson was sold “to a man named McDonald,” who owned land in Saline County, across the river and 30 miles west of his wife and child. McDonald forbade Anderson from visiting his family, and told him to “abandon and forget them, and take a new wife, or mistress.” Anderson couldn't bear this. In the early autumn of 1853, he snuck away to see his wife, father-in-law, and child one last time, then fled.

Newspaper clipping



Above: Newspaper story published around the time of John Anderson's renewed arrest warrant. Source: *Glasgow Weekly Times*, Sept. 20, 1860; courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Early in his escape, Anderson encountered slaveholder Seneca T. P. Digges who recognized him as a fugitive. In the ensuing confrontation, Anderson stabbed Digges, who died of his wounds on Oct. 11, 1853. Anderson continued north, reaching Windsor, Canada West (modern day Ontario). For five years, he lived and worked in several Canadian towns under the name "John Anderson" or the alias "James Hamilton." All the while, Anderson remained a wanted man in the United States, as evidenced by correspondence between U.S. Assistant Secretary of State William Henry Trescott and Howard County Circuit Court Clerk C. H. Stewart calling for Anderson's extradition.

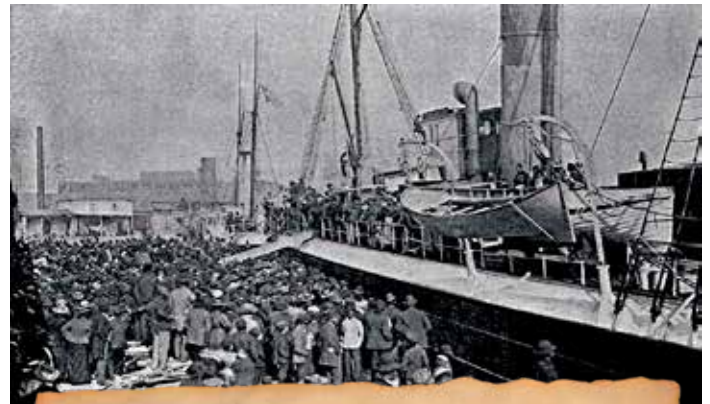
In 1860, Anderson's confidence was betrayed by a friend in Canada, who reported him to the Justice of the Peace in Detroit, Michigan, beginning an international court battle.

American authorities wanted Anderson punished for the killing of Digges, and to be extradited to the United States under the terms of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842. This agreement allowed for extradition only if the crime committed was also considered a crime in British North America. And,

unsurprisingly, Canadian and British abolitionists viewed Anderson's actions as justifiable homicide.

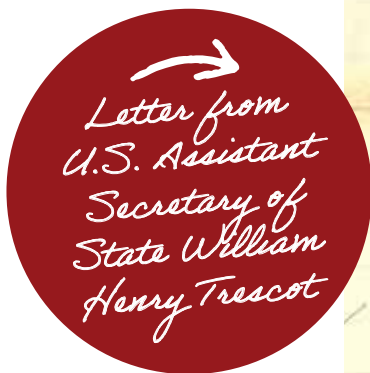
After months of debate, on Dec. 15, 1860, a Toronto court ruled that Anderson had committed murder under Canadian law and should be extradited. Before his transfer could be processed though, Anderson was released due to a technicality in his 1860 arrest warrant, which incorrectly stated that he was charged with "feloniously killing" Digges, not "murder." Despite this outcome, the case ultimately led to the passage of the Habeas Corpus Act of 1862 by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. This legislation prohibited British courts from issuing habeas corpus writs for colonies with court systems capable of handling such matters on their own.

Fearing further extradition attempts, abolitionists took Anderson to England, where his biography, *The Story of the Life of John Anderson* (1863), recounts he was well received in London. While there, he spoke at numerous anti-slavery meetings and received a basic education, but his travels eventually led him to Africa.



The Colony of Liberia

Originally a collection of colonies sponsored by southern-state colonization societies, the Colony of Liberia became home to thousands of displaced African Americans beginning in 1821. Native Liberians resisted settlement by American colonists, sometimes using force, yet the settlement continued. Census reports from the colony's early decades show that of the 4,571 emigrants who settled in Liberia between 1821 and 1843, only 40% survived. Still, colonization advocates continued to send freemen to Liberia even after the colony declared its independence in 1847.



Right: Letter from U.S. Assistant Secretary of State William Henry Trescot to Howard County Circuit Court Clerk C. H. Stewart, dated Nov. 3, 1860. Source: *Miscellaneous administrative records*; Howard County Circuit Court.

Left: Emigrants departing for Liberia from Savannah, Georgia. Source: *The Illustrated American*, March 21, 1896, vol. 19, p. 5; courtesy of the New York Public Library.

Department of State,
Washington, 3^d Nov^r, 1860.
C. H. Stewart, Esq.,
Fayette, Missouri.
Sir:
Referring to my letter of yesterday, I
now transmit to you the copy of a note
of this date, addressed to the Department
by Lord Lyons, the British Minister
accredited to this Government in expla-
nation of the delay which has taken
place in the surrender of John Anderson
by the Canadian authorities.
I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Wm Henry Trescot
Assistant Secretary.

In 1862, after a year of living in England, it was proposed to John Anderson that he start a new life in Liberia. *The Story of the Life of John Anderson* offers insight into the reasoning behind this suggestion. At his farewell soiree, Rev. J. G. Hewlett addressed Anderson, saying:

"You will, on your arrival in Liberia, be put in possession of five acres of land. By bringing your experience to agricultural pursuits, and by persevering in industrious toil, you may soon make this land a source of wealth. From all I can learn, the production of Liberia being cotton, tobacco, pimento, and others, like those of Missouri, the country from which you fled, I conclude the climate must be somewhat similar, and therefore suited to your health and constitution; and the soil similar, and therefore requiring the same culture. In your experience of the cultivation of cotton, tobacco, pepper, you have a capital you may at once employ to advantage."

At the same event, a letter from the Liberian Consul General to England, Gerard Ralston, was also read:

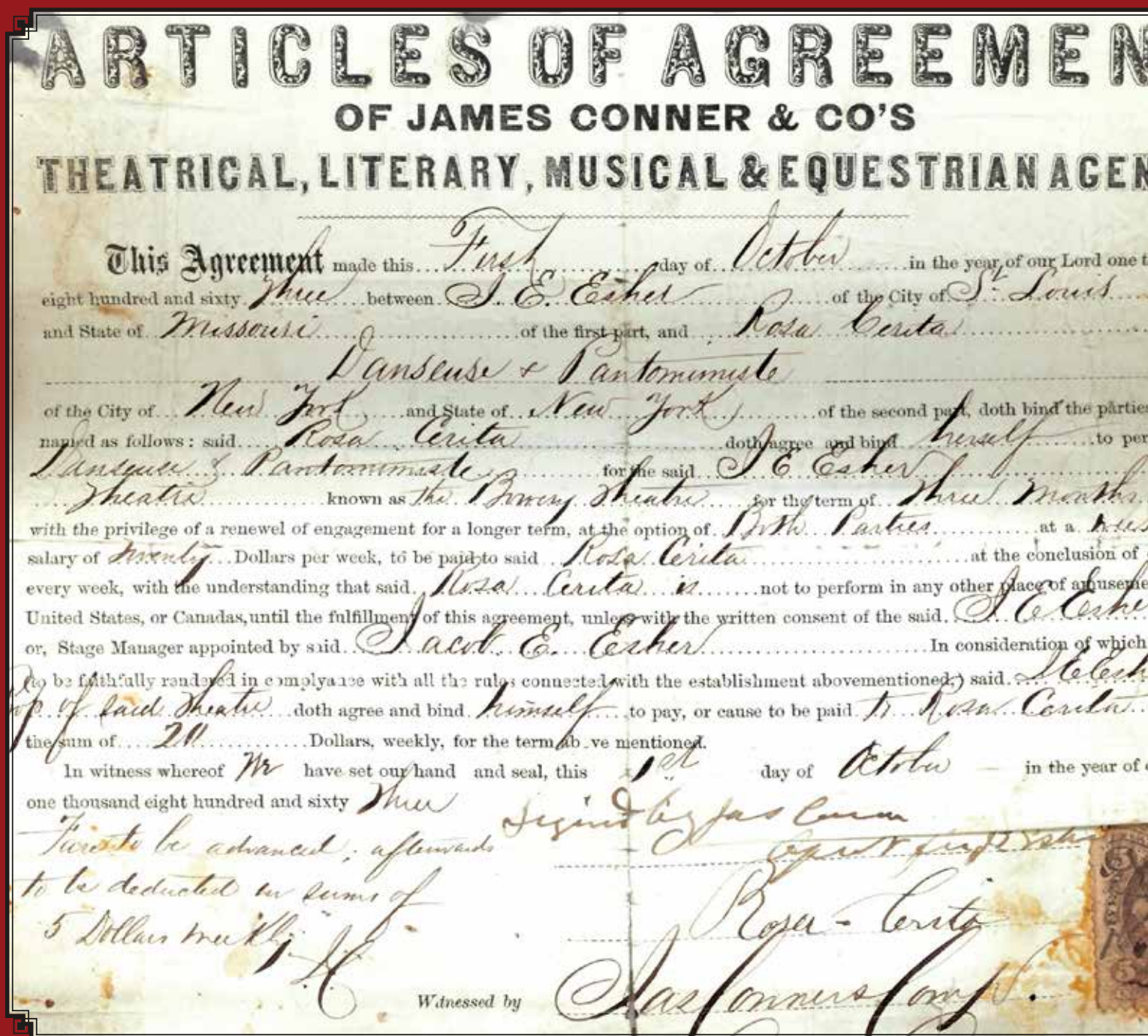
"... I might have said a few words to Mr. Anderson to encourage him to go to Liberia in expectation that, if he should be blessed with good health, he will be sure to succeed, and become a useful citizen

of the Republic, provided he exercise good sense, good conduct, and good industry. There is not a more eligible country in the world than Liberia for the negro--particularly an American negro, -- where he will find his compatriots in power, and his own language, laws, religion, manners, and all the institutions he has left behind in full force. There is the greatest abundance of natural wealth in Liberia; and only capital and skilled labour are required to develop it. I have no doubt Mr. Anderson will be a most useful immigrant, and, I trust, he will be a successful one. Wishing Mr. Anderson health and prosperity"

After boarding the African Steam Ship *Armenia* at Liverpool, bound for Cape Palmas, Liberia, on Dec. 24, 1862, nothing more is known of John Anderson. His story is fascinating and poignant nevertheless, shedding light on the horrible circumstances and decisions faced by enslaved people in the United States after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and the "golden age" of freedom suits' end. Equally significant is how Anderson's story places Missouri at the heart of the international slavery debate, demonstrating that events in rural areas, far removed from the bustling trade centers, can have a profound impact on the course of history.

A COURT FOR St. Louis Commons

BY NOAH EDWARDS, LOCAL RECORDS FIELD



Above: Articles of agreement from the February 1864 St. Louis County Law Commissioners Court case file of Rosa Cerita v. Jacob E. Esher. Source: Rosa Cerita v. Jacob E. Esher, February Term, 1842; Case No. 284; St. Louis County Law Commissioners Court; Missouri State Archives, St. Louis.

ON FOLK

ARCHIVIST



From October 2021 through October 2022, the Missouri State Archives used a grant from MO Humanities to process mid-19th century St. Louis County Law Commissioners Court case files in preparation for preservation imaging. The grant funded one full-time project archivist to separate, flatten, clean, arrange, and describe case files created by the court between 1857 and 1865.

The St. Louis County Circuit Court system evolved throughout the 19th century, eventually including various courts handling ever-increasing civil and criminal litigation. The Law Commissioners Court is one example, created in 1847 to take testimony for use in other county courts. Starting in 1851 and running until the court's 1865 dissolution, its jurisdiction was expanded to include civil cases involving debt or damages under \$150. Case files created by the court were stored in metal till drawers for decades, where they were covered in fine coal dust. In addition, many documents have become brittle or damaged in their 175 years.

These files contain a wealth of information that is useful to historians, genealogists, and other researchers. The documents are populated with carpenters, steamboat deckhands, enslaved people, housemaids, musicians, and other "regular" St. Louis residents. Their names provide an entry point for researchers to track social and economic relationships. As a result, the files offer a ground-level perspective, often providing great detail about people's lives in antebellum and wartime St. Louis County.

For example, take the case of a woman using the name Sarah H. Atwell, who sued John H. Atwell in April 1865, claiming he had promised to furnish her a permanent home. When Sarah temporarily left for New York City seeking medical treatment for her eyes, she received a letter from John stating his business partners did not approve of his cohabitating with an unmarried woman and that he would no longer continue the arrangement, though he promised to support her financially. Upon Sarah's

return to St. Louis, however, John refused to give her any money, claiming the letter was not a legally binding contract.

John's answer paints a slightly different story. He claimed to have met Sarah at a "whore ball" in St. Louis and that she solicited him into living together. In the ensuing 10 months, *"the intimacy was renewed and repeated, the defendant each time paying plaintiff the full market price for the commodity by him received."* John provided Sarah a large sum of money when she departed for New York but later repented the arrangement after he married, alleging Sarah was also married to another man and had no claim to the name "Atwell." Unfortunately for Sarah, who had since gone completely blind, the court dismissed her suit in a June 1865 order.

Account statements in the files contain information about almost every conceivable good and service available at the time, including groceries, building or sewing supplies, gravestones, and lightning rods. Workers sued for carpentry wages, work as waiters and housemaids, and even for the insertion of a set of artificial teeth. Certain cases provide important information about the development of St. Louis as a city. Carpenters, stonemasons, material suppliers, and others sued property owners and contractors for unpaid work debts incurred during the construction of area buildings. There is also information about structure types and sometimes detailed descriptions showing construction methods and materials used in the city's architectural development.

Many cases involve steamboat workers suing their employers for unpaid wages. The volume of these alone highlights the vital role the vessels played in the St. Louis economy. They also illustrate the precarious nature of on-board employment for unskilled laborers. While some workers sued for wages as engineers, pilots, firefighters, and even a few pastry chefs, the vast majority were unskilled deckhands, roustabouts, and day laborers. From case testimonies, it seems many steamboats hired groups of men in St. Louis, but—soon after departing—the captains would decide they had hired too many, and the ship's mate would order a number off the boat. To hear the workers tell it, they were all model employees chosen at random. After receiving payment for time worked, they were left ashore to make their own way back to St. Louis.

Case files from 1861 to 1865 contextualize the city during the Civil War. In general, the same types of cases appeared during this period as in the preceding years, indicating that life simply went on as usual for most St. Louis residents. Outside of a few military uniform accounts or carpentry work on various forts within the city, most Civil War



Above: Boxes containing St. Louis County Law Commissioners Court case files at the Missouri State Archives-St. Louis. Source: *Missouri State Archives (MSA)*; photograph by MSA-St. Louis staff.

references are tangential. These are commonly witness subpoenas for members of Union regiments stationed within and around St. Louis. Other cases include continuance motions because material witnesses were serving elsewhere in the military. One of the earliest cases to reference the war included such a motion because one witness had joined the Union Army and another the Confederate Army.

During wartime, in August 1863, William Broham filed suit against the Steamboat Fanny Ogden for wages as a roustabout on a trip up the Missouri River. When the vessel docked in Waverly, Missouri, the plaintiff and a number of other roustabouts refused to disembark and work, despite the protestations of the boat's mate. Meanwhile, the steamboat's captain was eager to quickly load his cargo because guerrillas were reportedly in the area, and he was concerned they would return after nightfall. The captain even attempted to bargain with the owner of a large quantity of hemp

rope to leave it behind, but the owner was similarly concerned the guerrillas would enter Waverly and burn his merchandise if it remained.

A research area proven richer than anticipated concerns the various forms of entertainment available in antebellum St. Louis. Cases involving the operation of bowling alleys and billiard halls without license illustrate the sheer number of these establishments, and the many account statements for liquor highlight alcohol's ever-present consumption. Plaintiffs turned to the court seeking payment for their services as musicians, dancers, actors, playwrights, and composers. Several cases even relate to traveling shows and circuses, such as that of an English woman who claimed the circus that hired her promised to pay her passage back home or a case involving the construction of a sea lion water tank.

In one suit from February 1864, Rosa Cerita, a danseuse (ballet dancer) and pantomimist from New York City who had contracted with J. E. Esher for three months of performances at the Bowery Theater, claimed she had not been fully paid. According to the stage manager, Cerita had presented herself as an expert but was deficient "*in every way as a first-class performer.*" She was also frequently absent, had a bad temperament, and many articles of clothing mysteriously went missing from the dressing room during her engagement. He ultimately discharged her for incompetence, stating that he would have done so sooner were it not for her children.

Nearly 6,100 case files were processed in two phases during the grant. The first involved flattening and chronologically arranging the papers within each file, while the second required project archivists to clean surface dirt and coal dust from the documents, mend tears, and describe each case. In addition to basic information such as litigant names and cause of action, further descriptions concerning debt type, property location, names of enslaved persons, steamboat references, and more were added to assist researchers in identifying cases relevant to their particular area of study. Processed case files from 1860 to 1864 have been imaged and are now available to view through the Missouri Judicial Records Database, along with the accompanying descriptive information. Look for files from the remaining years covered by the project in the coming months.

Search St. Louis Law Commissioners Court records and more using the Missouri State Archives online Missouri Judicial Records Database here: <https://s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/judicialrecords/>.

A ST. LOUIS EXAMPLE

MORMONS AND THE COURTS

BY PAT BARGE, MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES-ST. LOUIS RESEARCH ANALYST

Conflict and suspicion between the Mormon Church and other established religions dated virtually to the church's 1830 founding in Palmyra, New York. Mormonism inspired deeply devout followers but also conflicted with mainstream religious communities as Mormon membership grew and the believers migrated westward. The well-documented conflict between Missourians and the Mormon Church led to Gov. Lilburn Boggs's infamous 1838 Mormon Extermination Order. This resulted in the Mormon community relocating to Nauvoo, Illinois (for more information, see the Missouri State Archives online resources on the Mormon War: www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/mormon). Other than a few cases in northwest Missouri, Mormons largely disappeared from Missouri courts. However, a case from the St. Louis Circuit Court's March 1842 term between Joseph Smith and Marshall Brotherton recently emerged from the collection of the Missouri State Archives-St. Louis. In March 1842, Smith sued the St. Louis County Sheriff for possession of molasses, sugar, coffee, and tea that the sheriff had seized from Smith's agent, George Miller, who had purchased the supplies for the Church and was transporting them from New Orleans to Nauvoo on board the Steamboat Eliza.

The case contains two sets of depositions addressing the ownership of the groceries and highlights the general distrust of Mormons. High-ranking members of the Mormon Church, all close advisors to Joseph Smith, provided testimony. Each deponent directly addressed the legal appropriateness of the grocery purchase. Each pointedly testified that under Joseph Smith's direction, George Miller was to oversee the purchase of groceries for general consumption by the Church members, each emphasizing that they were not for Smith's personal use. They all attested that Miller was "*frequently engaged in transacting the business of importing for Joseph Smith.*" Further, Lyman Wight and Orson Spencer each witnessed the discussion between Smith and Miller. They reiterated that Church funds were applied for the express purpose of buying groceries to disperse among the members and not for Joseph Smith's personal consumption or that of any of the elders. Hyrum Smith, Joseph's older brother, concurred and stressed that none of the elders had received personal benefit of goods for the Church money spent and attested to the honest use of Church funds.

Conversely, the depositions for Brotherton mainly questioned the "*truth & veracity*" of the Mormon leaders, zeroing in on qualms about their religion rather than the details of the grocery transaction. One deponent stated

and said that sometimes the fore part of October last George Miller came to his house and told him that he had been employed by Joseph Smith and others to go to New Orleans and make a purchase of some groceries and asked him if he wished to send for some groceries for himself. He told him he would like the pleasure to do so. And he let him have thirty Dollars and gave him a bill of lading which was one barrel of sugar house Molasses, two hundred pounds of Muscovado Sugar, and two hundred pounds of Rice and pack and directed him to pack the same in good substantial barrels and mark them H Smith Nauvoo, when George Miller returned to Nauvoo he told him he had purchased the articles but did not mark them as he had been directed him to, in consequence of which they were forfeited to the State of Missouri. And when they were forfeited they were his property. He testified that he was not he being only employed to do the business both for himself as well as others. He now testifies that he has not received anything for the money so sent.

Hyrum Smith

State of Missouri

Left and Below: Testimony and signature of Hyrum Smith, Joseph Smith's brother, from the March 1842 St. Louis Circuit Court case file of *Joseph Smith v. Marshall Brotherton*. Source: *Joseph Smith v. Marshall Brotherton*, March Term, 1842; Case No. 109; St. Louis Circuit Court; Missouri State Archives, St. Louis.

Hyrum Smith

Take a closer look!

that Mormons' "oaths would not be taken where Joe Smith or the Mormon Church was interested." Upon cross-examination, however, he admitted there was a "strong prejudice [...] against the Mormons [...] on account of their bad moral conduct, their thefts, etc." He then contradicted his statement and said that he has "no prejudice against them on account of their religion." Another deponent added that "apart from Mormonism [...], I do not know that there is anything against their character." Yet another admitted, though, that he had no bad words to speak against Hyrum Smith personally "except his Mormonism." Without citing any specific instances, deponents of Brotherton stated that Mormons "would perjure themselves in any matter in which Joe Smith was interested or was directed to do so by Joseph Smith." Not one of the defendants' deponents even generally defended the grocery transaction or its intent that brought this case to court, let alone testified to any related transactions.

Testimony for the defendant illustrates the prejudice that existed against the Mormon people.

The deponents shared only their assessment of the Mormons' character and did not address the specific details of the financial transaction, the mobility of the property, or its intended purpose. This impugning of the Mormon character likely is the reason the court dismissed the case as a "nonsuit" on September 23, 1843. This case illustrates only a single episode of the social and religious conflicts between the Mormons and those of conventional religions in the 19th century that further intensified as the Mormons continued to migrate westward.

The Missouri State Archives–St. Louis is the sole branch of the Missouri State Archives. Originally started as a records preservation project with the St. Louis City Circuit Court, the high quantity and national-class quality of the materials revealed resulted in a formal partnership between the court and the Office of the Secretary of State to operate a reference room from the project site. The St. Louis office is located in the Carnahan Criminal Courts Building, 1114 Market St., Rm. 245, St. Louis, MO 63101.

THE 1967 JEFFERSON CITY PURPLE MARTIN MASSACRE

BY ERIKA WOHLK, VISUAL MATERIALS ARCHIVIST



Above: Source: RG103_Digital_0038; RG103.03 Missouri Department of Conservation Photograph Collection; photograph by Jim Rathert; Missouri State Archives.

Missouri lawmakers thought highly of the purple martin in 2003 when they voted the small community of Adrian the Purple Martin Capital of the state. Alas, this admiration wasn't always the case. This essay tells another Jefferson City story regarding this official state symbol.

On the evening of Aug. 21, 1967, Conservation Agent Ben Krider received a call from a Jefferson City woman saying that there were men outside the Governor's Mansion shooting purple martins. Krider was a three-minute drive away, and when he arrived on scene, he found bird carcasses all



“

**Krider estimated
that the men
had killed
approximately
2,000 PURPLE
MARTINS WITH
SHOTGUNS.**

over the ground. The men responsible claimed they believed the birds were starlings. In the United States, European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) are fair game; they are an invasive species native to Europe. Purple martins (*Progne subis*), however, are a protected migratory species. The difference in human terms is obvious – the killing of one is a crime.

Krider estimated that the men had killed approximately 2,000 purple martins with shotguns. He kept around 75 specimens as evidence. Then a question central to this investigation arose: *why* did they shoot the birds? Rumors flew faster than the martins that Missouri Gov. Warren E. Hearnes had ordered the massacre.

Above: A flock of purple martins sits on telephone wires in Jefferson City in August 1964. Source: Otto Kroeger Photograph Collection; photograph by Joe Kroeger; Missouri State Archives.

THE PLAYERS

MELVIN DICKINSON (M.D.) ANGLIN (1906–1992)

An expert witness for the prosecution and President of the National Association for the Protection and Propagation of Purple Martins and Bluebirds of America, Inc.

EARL KENT CAMPBELL (1933–2012)

Served as the Technical Assistant with the Missouri Department of Revenue and as a Cole County Deputy Sheriff. He was part of the group accused of killing the purple martins.

STANLEY CHARLES DIEMLER (1930–1996)

Worked as the Administrative Officer with the Division of Planning and Construction under the Missouri Department of Revenue. He was also a Cole County Deputy Sheriff, and was accused of killing the martins.



Above Left: Missouri Gov. Warren E. Hearnese. Source: RG5_Portraits_17001-010; RG005 Secretary of State Publications Division Portrait Collection; Missouri State Archives.



Above Right: John Paulus Jr., Director of the Division of Planning and Construction. Source: RG5_Portraits_27-033-064; RG005 Secretary of State Publications Division Portrait Collection; Missouri State Archives.

WARREN E. HEARNES (1923–2009)

Served as Missouri Governor from 1965–1973, and was rumored to have ordered the purple martin massacre.

LARRY A. JARRETT (1942–)

A friend of John Paulus, Jr., and part of the group accused of killing the martins.

BYRON L. KINDER JR. (1933–)

The Cole County Prosecuting Attorney who filed charges against the five men accused of killing the martins.

BEN L. KRIDER (1931–1985)

An agent with the Missouri Department of Conservation who was first on the scene and identified the birds as purple martins.

ORIN LEE MUNGER (1899–1978)

The Cole County Magistrate Court Judge who presided over the case of the five men accused of the martin massacre.

JOHN PAULUS JR. (1909–1993)

Worked as the Director of the Division of Planning and Construction under the Missouri Department of Revenue. He ordered his staff to kill the birds; Paulus himself reportedly received the order from the Highway Patrol who allegedly received the order from Gov. Hearnese.

EDWARD L. PLOGSTED (1932–1974)

The husband of Paulus's administrative assistant, Betty Jo Plogsted. He was friends with Paulus and one of the five men accused of killing the martins.

ROY FRANCIS RENN (1940–)

Served as the Building and Grounds Superintendent under the Missouri Department of Revenue, and served as a Cole County Deputy Sheriff. He was in charge of groundskeeping and maintenance at the Governor's Mansion, and was one of the group accused of killing the martins.

LEROY HERMAN (BUD) WILBERS (1932–2014)

The defense attorney for the five defendants accused of killing the martins.

THE MARTIN KILLINGS

The martin killings were an immediate press sensation. Stories appeared in local and national newspapers, all lamenting the loss of the birds. The press reported that the men responsible had confused the martins for starlings.

It is true that both species are roughly the same size with the starling being only slightly bigger than the martin. The colors and body shape are different, but to an amateur may be difficult to distinguish. Both species are found in flocks. Whatever the case, the fact remained that 2,000 martins lay dead.

Krider encountered five men that day in August: Earl Campbell, Edward Plogsted, Roy Renn, Larry Jarrett, and Stanley Diemler. Three were state employees and the other two were friends of John

Paulus, Director of the Division of Planning and Construction. It was Paulus who ordered the men to take out the birds that evening, but newspapers were quick to blame Gov. Hearnes as the original source of Paulus's orders. In fact, the *New York Times* interviewed an anonymous spokesman for Hearnes directly. *"It seems that for the last five or six weeks," the spokesman said, 'the governor has been plagued by birds, and you know purple martins and starlings can be equally noisy. Well, he said to a sergeant in the State Highway Patrol who was on duty at the mansion on Monday, "let's try to do something about these birds." Somehow that was translated into, "let's kill those birds."'"* (Kneeland 1967, p. 14)

According to the same *New York Times* report, the Highway Patrol then reportedly passed Hearnes's order to the Division of Planning and Construction via Stanley Diemler and John Paulus. Hearnes himself refused to comment on the matter. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* said on Aug. 23 that *"the Governor did not order the shooting."* (Rose 1967, p. 3A) This was the same day the *New York Times* article was published. A *Springfield Leader-Press* article titled, *"Martin Massacre Governor's Idea"* also came out on the 23rd. These conflicting reports persisted for the next few days with *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, and *Time* also picking up the story.

Below: European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). Source: Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC); photograph by MDC staff.



“

[Hearnes] said to a sergeant [...] “LET’S TRY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THESE BIRDS.” Somehow that was translated into, “LET’S KILL THOSE BIRDS.”

The investigation spanned all levels of government with federal, state, and local agencies involved. Investigators included John Hague of the Federal Game Management authority from St. Joseph, Missouri and State Director of Conservation Carl Noren. Noren met with the Governor and at least three of the men involved in the shooting shortly after the incident. Local Cole County Prosecutor Byron Kinder filed misdemeanor charges and Cole County Magistrate Court Judge O. Lee Munger was under public pressure to take up the case.

The charges against the five men stemmed from Missouri Wildlife Code §252.040 Taking of Wildlife. *“No wildlife shall be pursued, taken, killed, possessed or disposed of except in the manner, to the extent and at the time or times permitted by such rules and regulations; and any pursuit, taking, killing, possession or disposition thereof, except as permitted by such rules and regulations, are hereby prohibited. Any person violating this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.”* (Missouri Conservation Commission 1967, 58-59.) Violations were punishable by up to three months in county jail and/or a fine not exceeding \$500.00 (§ 252.230). Presumably, this was per offense. The prosecutor and judge had it in their power to charge each man with up to 2,000 counts. The five defendants appeared before Judge Munger with their lawyer L.H. (Bud) Wilbers on Sept. 6 and entered not guilty pleas to one count each. They asked for a jury trial. Munger scheduled the two-day trial for Oct. 19-20.

Martins are the country's largest swallows and are native to North America. For centuries before 1967, invasive species ousted the martins from their natural habitat. The European starling and house sparrows (aka English sparrows) took over the martins' food source and habitat so much so that the eastern subspecies of the bird nearly went extinct. The martins' saving grace turned out to be humans. People started constructing artificial homes that attracted the martins. Soon, these homes were the only habitat saving the subspecies from extinction.

The town of Griggsville, Illinois, proudly calls itself the Purple Martin Capital of the Nation. In 1967, the town was home to Trio Manufacturing, the largest manufacturer of purple martin homes in the world. The company's founder J.L. Wade also published a newsletter that had thousands of subscribers nationwide. The birding world was watching Missouri's purple martin event closely. *The Purple Martin Capital News* sent a reporter and photographer to Jefferson City as soon as it heard about the incident. They interviewed James Bailey, Missouri Department of Conservation Protection Division Superintendent. Bailey stated that the Conservation Department had not been given advance notice of the plan to shoot the birds. He further confirmed that all the feathered victims were purple martins. Regarding Hearnes's involvement, Bailey said, *“I'm sure that when he suggested someone get rid of the birds, he did not intend for someone to take a gun and go right out and shoot them.”* He also said, *“There isn't any justification for something like this!”* (*The Purple Martin Capital News* August 1967, p. 4)

The reporting estimated that the flock outside the Governor's Mansion was 10,000 strong and

Below: A pair of purple martins perch on a martin house. Martins today rely almost exclusively on human-made nest boxes when nesting. Source: RG103_037_3655; RG103 Missouri Department of Conservation Photograph Collection; photograph by Jim Rathert; Missouri State Archives.



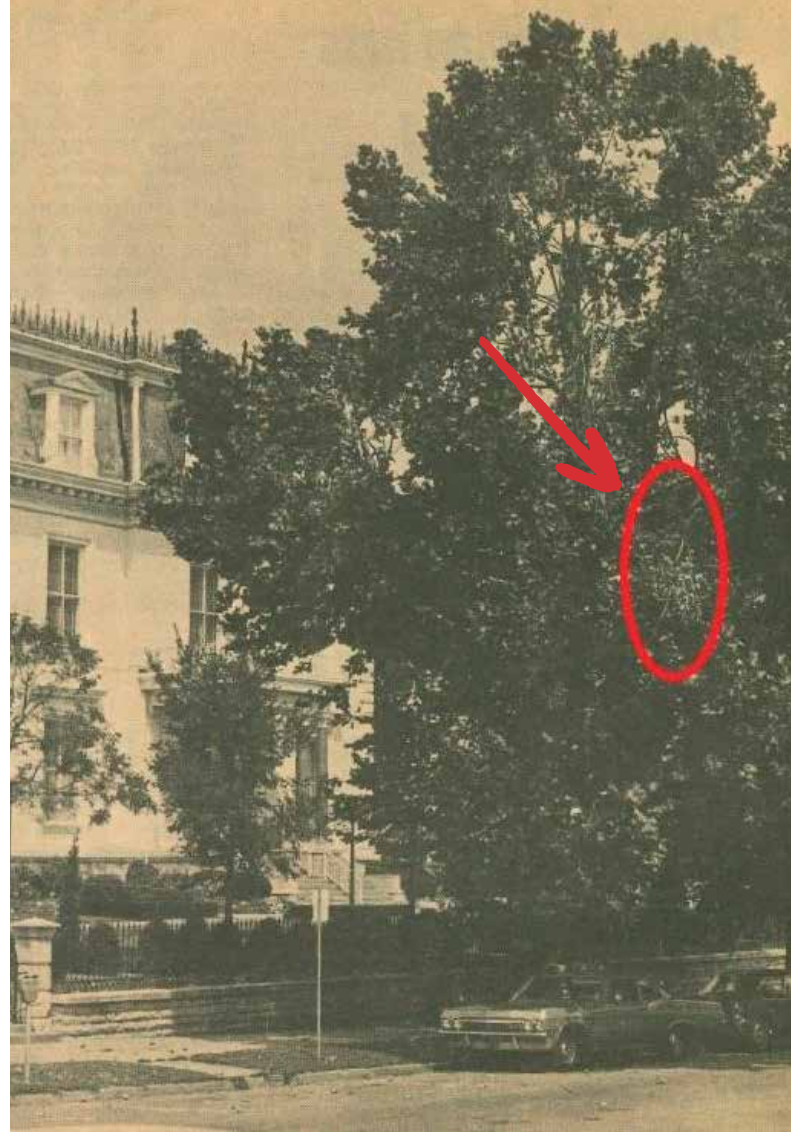
that between 1,800 and 2,000 birds were killed. Hearnese and others in the neighborhood allegedly considered the birds a nuisance. They were noisy, messy and even – also allegedly – broke a tree limb. Several cars in the area were spotted with telltale white droppings on them. *The Purple Martin Capital News* photographer was able to find one broken limb on a tree outside the Governor's Mansion (circled, left), but the reporter could not verify that it was damaged by the martins. He speculated as to other possible causes, such as a flock of starlings that *had* been in the neighborhood weeks prior to the martins' arrival. Another possibility – not mentioned by the reporter – was that the limb was broken by gunfire.

The reporting supplied a motive for what they and others termed a "massacre." *The Purple Martin Capital News* played another role in this case; they marshaled letter-writers from around the country to flood Gov. Hearnese's office with letters of protest. Some of the letters were reprinted in the August and September issues of the News. Others wrote to Judge Munger, which may have had a role in his deciding to try the case.

A few days before the trial was to be held in October, Wilbers asked Judge Munger for a continuance. He granted the request and the trial was moved to Nov. 15. When the day finally came, all five changed their plea to guilty. Wilber told the *Jefferson City Post Tribune*, "the defendants felt a moral obligation they should not 'hide behind the law.'" ("Purple Martin Case Resolved..." 1967, pg. 1)

Despite the guilty plea, Munger did allow the prosecution one expert witness: M.D. Anglin, president of an organization called the National Association for the Protection and Propagation of Purple Martins and Bluebirds of America, Inc. Anglin testified on the difference between starlings and purple martins and also supplied advice on how to get rid of starlings. *The Purple Martin Capital News* reporter wrote in November, "When asked by the prosecuting attorney, 'Don't you feel it is incumbent that anyone shooting them should know the difference between them (martins) and other birds?' Mr. Anglin drawled, 'According to where they got their orders. I heard several stories about that, and...' Both attorneys snapped to attention, and Mr. Kinder interrupted, 'Well, we don't want to go into that!' The gallery rocked with laughter. But Mr. Anglin persevered, 'Well, that's all right, fellows. I don't want to say anything against the governor, either.'" (*The Purple Martin Capital News* November 1967, p. 3)

Finally, before issuing his sentence, Judge Munger had three specific questions for the five defendants. He wanted to know 1) if they were acting on anyone's orders; 2) if they knew the birds were martins; and 3)



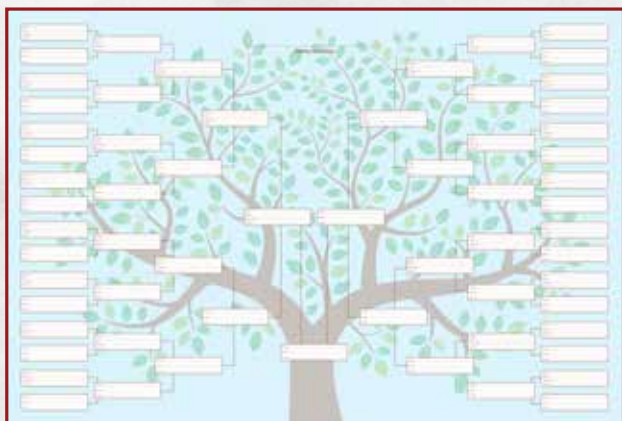
Above: Photograph of the damaged tree outside the Governor's Mansion. The circled area shows the broken limb. Source: *The Purple Martin Capital News*, August 1967, p. 5; courtesy of North Pike District Library, Griggsville, Illinois.

if they had known the species would they still have shot them. Stanley Diemler answered on behalf of all five. As to the first, he stated, "The dispersal was done at the request of someone else, but I took on myself the method to be used." (*The Purple Martin Capital News* November 1967, p. 3) The answer to number two was "no" and to number three the same.

After the hour and a half discourse, Judge Munger fined each of the five \$50.00 plus \$12.10 in court costs for a total of \$62.10 each and sent them on their ways. Both Anglin and the News reporter had the same lesson to teach in the end: the public needs to be educated on avian wildlife. There is also one final irony... purple martin houses stood on the grounds of the Governor's Mansion.

For sources and further reading, visit <https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/Publications/symbols/massacre.pdf>.

2025 "SHOW ME" GENEALOGY FELLOWSHIP



The Friends of the Missouri State Archives are proud to announce the inaugural **"Show-Me" Genealogy Fellowship in 2025**. This new annual award supports genealogical research and promotes the use of Missouri's public records, building on the Missouri State Archives' longstanding contributions to the genealogy community.

ELIGIBILITY

Any researcher utilizing the holdings of the Missouri State Archives and/or its St. Louis branch for genealogical purposes is eligible to apply. However, fellows may not receive third party payment for any research related to their proposal that is conducted at either Missouri State Archives location.

AWARD DETAILS

The fellow will receive a **\$1,500 award** to assist with travel expenses when visiting the Missouri State Archives and/or its St. Louis branch. The award will be distributed in two payments:

- **\$800** upon submission of a signed research/acknowledgement publication guidelines form
- **\$700** after completing the research and submitting a report on findings

Recipients must conduct their research within one year of award notification and submit a final report detailing their work. Additionally, the recipient must acknowledge the Missouri State Archives and the Friends of the Missouri State Archives "Show-Me" Genealogy Fellowship in any published work (e.g., articles, books, family histories, etc.) resulting from their research. A copy of any such publication must also be provided to the Missouri State Archives.

How to Apply

Applicants must complete an application found through the link of this announcement and submit the following materials:

- A brief research proposal (1,000 words or less);
- A CV or résumé; and
- Contact information for three genealogy community references.

These materials should be sent via email to brian.rogers@sos.mo.gov or by mail to:

Missouri State Archives
P.O. Box 1714
Jefferson City, MO 65102

DEADLINE & NOTIFICATION

All application materials must be received by **Friday, May 30, 2025**. The fellowship recipient will be notified no later than **Monday, June 16, 2025**.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The recipient will be chosen based on:

- Strength and originality of the research proposal
- Clear use of Missouri State Archives' holdings, with specific collection citations
- Potential impact on the genealogy community
- Applicant's qualifications
- Role of the award in supporting the project's success

Proposals requiring onsite research at the Missouri State Archives and/or its St. Louis branch are preferred over those using the Missouri State Archives' online records.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ACCESS THE APPLICATION FORM, visit www.sos.mo.gov/archives/education/showmegenealogyfellowship.



UPCOMING EVENTS THURSDAY EVENING SPEAKER SERIES

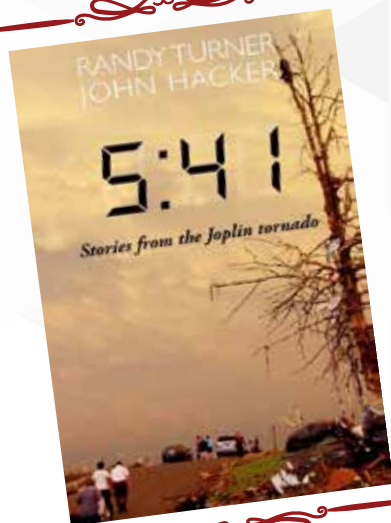
POET OF THE REBELLION: LAURA REDDEN SEARING AND DEAF HISTORY IN MISSOURI Thursday, April 17, 2025, 7 p.m.

In recent years, the Deaf community has gained greater visibility in popular culture. The success of CODA (2021), starring Deaf actors Troy Kotsur and Marlee Matlin, along with Nyle DiMarco's groundbreaking achievements as the first Deaf winner of *Dancing with the Stars* and *America's Next Top Model*, showcase this shift. Yet, Deaf Americans have been shaping history and defying barriers since before our nation's founding.

Lawrence Yates, President of the Missouri School for the Deaf, and Becky M. Davis, Executive Director of the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, will highlight the extraordinary life of one Deaf Missourian: Laura Redden Searing. A gifted poet and journalist, Searing published under both her own name and the pen name Howard Glyndon. During the Civil War, The St. Louis Republican sent her to Washington, D.C., where she not only reported on the conflict, but also wrote poems about the events she witnessed on the battlefield. Join us as Yates and Davis share how, despite living as a Deaf woman in the 19th century, Searing rose to become one of the leading literary voices of her day, defying the presumed limitations of her disability. *American Sign Language Interpreter will be provided.*



5:41: STORIES FROM THE JOPLIN TORNADO Thursday, May 15, 2025, 7 p.m.



At 5:41 p.m. on May 22, 2011, the deadliest tornado to strike the United States in 60 years tore through Joplin, Missouri. By the time it completed its devastating path, one-third of the community lay in ruins, 161 lives were lost, and survivors were left with stories they would carry forever. *5:41: Stories from the Joplin Tornado* brings together firsthand accounts from more than two dozen survivors, alongside reporting from award-winning journalist and photographer John Hacker of the *Joplin Globe* and former newspaper reporter and editor Randy Turner, who was teaching eighth-grade English at Joplin East Middle School in 2011. Join us as Turner chronicles both the tragedy of the storm's destruction and the triumph of Joplin's residents—whose resilience and determination to rebuild inspired a nation.

SAVE THE DATE!

Friends of the Missouri State Archives 2025 Annual Meeting & Luncheon

Feat. guest speaker Dr. Frances Levine presenting on her 2025 book, *Crossings: Women on the Santa Fe Trail*
Saturday, June 14, 2025, at 11:30 a.m.

JAN. 1, 2024 — FEB. 21, 2025

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